



MINUTES

MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

June 24, 2016

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

PRESENT FOR THE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

Commissioner Chair, Gary Marowske
Commissioner Vice Chair, Alex Declercq
Commissioner, Dennis Nickels
Commissioner, James Hansen
Commissioner, Ward Walstrom
Commissioner, Dennis Grinold
Special Consultant, R.J. Peterson

OTHERS PRESENT

Ron Olson, DNR
Vicki Anthes, DNR
Paul Petersen, DNR
Jason Fleming, DNR
Maia Turek, DNR
Jacklin Blodgett, DNR
Michelle Wieber, DNR
Linnae Dawson, DNR
Jordan Byelich, DNR
Anna Sylvester, DNR

NOT PRESENT

Commissioner, Nicki Polan



MICHIGAN STATE WATERWAYS COMMISSION

OPENING COMMENTS

Chair Gary Marowske called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., June 24, 2016. Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

Written Correspondence: There was no written correspondence.

Appearances: Dan Wyers, Assistant Public Works Director, expressed how thankful he was to the Michigan State Waterways Commission for coming to the City of Sault Ste. Marie to hold the meeting. Mr. Wyers stated that they have a lot going on, lots to do and are working on water trails, as kayaking is growing in popularity. Mr. Wyers mentioned there many needs, as they face some challenges, but wants to make things great for the community of Sault Ste. Marie.

Wayne Koppa, Chairperson for Crawford County Trails, has concerns on water trails, rivers, lakes and all trail types alike. Mr. Koppa is seeking any and all kinds of help to get Crawford County Trails recognized and maintained successfully.

John Lechner, Contractor from Sault Ste. Marie, addressed the commission about the bidding process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Chair Gary Marowske asked for a motion for approval of the minutes from the April 29, 2016 Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was put into place by Commissioner Al Declercq and was seconded by Commissioner Ward Walstrom. Motion carried unanimously, 6-0.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCIAL UPDATE

A brief financial update was given by **Al Declercq**; documents to support this update were included in each commissioner's packet for their review. Concern with fund balances growing, as some municipalities may find it difficult to match grants at 50% to match. **Dennis Nickels** spoke of seeking any grant community's 5 year plan so the commission can better plan. **Paul Petersen** spoke briefly about grants and gathering survey information. **Ron Olson** reviewed the relationships between the USACE, DNR, and communities noting there is a good working relationship that exists.

MARKETING UPDATE

Ward Walstrom started the marketing update by presenting a video he created that depicts a day on the water representing Michigan boating opportunities. Marketing updates were also provided in each commissioner's packets. Topics of discussion included Michigan Boating Week, in which it was found that the attendees had great things to say. It was suggested that boat access sites could have a rack for kayak placement/storage, for customer use. **Maia Turek** discussed some quick facts and figures regarding Michigan Boating Week, states that they are producing 3 or 4 videos on boating around Michigan. The plan is to reach out through social media to increase activity with the Millennial generation.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Nicki Polan was absent from the meeting, and that she is expected to present an update in August at the next scheduled meeting. A resolution on Port Sanilac is expected at that time.

WAYS AND MEANS UPDATE

Dennis Nickels presented the ways and means update during the work session, as there was a lot of information to cover. Key points being to raise money, improve boating environment, access, quality and safe experiences. Information regarding the presentation was included in each commissioner's packets for their review. A Power Point slide show was presented, with each commissioner given a hard copy for their records. Other topics of interest included, popularity of paddle sports, miles of shoreline available along with the rivers and lakes. Coast guard and State regulations/standards for personal floatation devices were briefly discussed, and will be a topic at the next meeting.



GENERAL UPDATE

Ron Olson reviewed the meeting held recently with the City Officials from Saugatuck, Douglas, and the Harbor Authority. Attendees included, **Linnae Dawson**, **Paul Petersen**, and Jon Allan from the Office of the Great Lakes. The Detroit Public Boating Update included discussion of harbor capacity at Detroit-area marinas and future boat launch opportunities on Belle Isle and Milliken State Park.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

No legislative updates to report at this time.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Brief update from **Jason Fleming** on reservations, he states they are good and have not seen any decreases. A marina survey is out for the reservation system and Jason will try to provide an update at the August meeting.

WATER TRAIL UPDATE

Vicki Anthes stated the department is still compiling information from stakeholders. Vicki will have information to share at the August meeting.

PROJECT UPDATES

Jordan Byelich informed the commission that dredging and dock construction for 52 transient slips, are in progress at East Tawas State Harbor with completion in September. The Chestonia Bridge that spans the Jordan River in Antrim County is in need of a new design, as access under the current bridge is a concern to boaters. \$1.2 million has been raised through donations for this project, and a design and plan are being discussed. The Fayette Historic State Park marina project is close to completion.

Paul Petersen gave a brief Grant-In-Aid project update. Harrisville is in the beginning stage of a dock replacement project that will be constructed over five phases. Paul also touched on recent Leland and Pentwater navigational channel dredge grant projects to be accomplished this summer, both agreements have been executed. The Grand River Waterway project, a general fund project, the study is to be completed by the end of July. Kawkawlin River dredge, which was started last summer, will be completed by the end of July. Grant agreements from the April applicants have been written and executed.



GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL REPORT

The US Army Corps of Engineers – Detroit District Great Lakes water level outlook was included in each commissioner’s meeting packet for their information.

OTHER

Chairman Gary Marowske suggested that the 2017 spring meeting is held in Saugatuck.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

The next Michigan State Waterways Commission Meeting: Frankfort, August 19, 2016

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